



**SALISBURY COMMUNITY APPEARANCE COMMISSION**  
**Neighborhood Leaders Alliance Subcommittee Meeting**

Tuesday, December 15, 2009

Noon

217 S. Main Street, First Floor Conference Room

**MINUTES**

**In attendance:** Garth Birdsey, Greta Connor (Chair), Mimi Howard, Lou Manning, Gwen Matthews, Sean Meyers, Barbara Perry, Sara Robinson, Bill Safrit, Jack Thomson and Christine Wilson

**City Staff:** Chris Branham, Diana Moghrabi, and Lynn Raker

**Neighborhoods Represented:** Brooklyn South Square, Ellis Street Graded School District, Fulton Heights, Meadow Brook, Milford Hills, Milford Knoll, North Main (NOMA), Park Avenue, Sedgefield Acres, West End

The meeting began with lunch and greeting time. Neighborhoods and Education Committee Chair Greta Connor welcomed the attendees and made introductions before turning the meeting over to Lynn Raker.

Lynn Raker, staff liaison to the CAC, opened with a bit of background for people who had not attended the October 29, 2009, NLA meeting where this subcommittee was formed to research the role and prepare a blueprint for a future Salisbury Housing Commission. (Barbara Perry, Greta Connor, Bill Safrit, Mimi Howard, Garth Birdsey, Lorraine Reidda, Sara Robinson, Chris Branham, Lynn Raker, and Diana Moghrabi) Handouts were distributed to describe how it is handled in other cities.

**OPEN DISCUSSION**

This recommendation to City Council could be in the form of a Housing Commission or a Review Board and is the result of a CAC Neighborhood Leader Alliance study, the Better Housing staff study, and the Historic Neighborhoods Alliance study.

A presentation will be made to City Council January 19, 2010, when the CAC presents its annual goals and highlights. There will be another subcommittee meeting January 8, 2010, at noon to finalize the Council presentation regarding this recommendation. It is the desire of this subcommittee and the Community Appearance Commission that this item of concern and recommendation be included in the annual City Council Retreat in February, 2010.

It is recommended that the peer review board/commission would be appointed by City Council. This subcommittee requests that Council Member and CAC liaison Maggie Blackwell chair a council committee that would make the final recommendation to City Council for their decision. Maggie

Blackwell has a great deal of history and the background leading up to this subcommittee recommendation.

Appointees to the peer review/commission should be diverse in geographic locations, homeowners/renters/landlords, race, age, gender, etc. This board should number seven members. Members of this board would need training to understand the code which they are being asked to enforce.

The subcommittee recommends that this proposed peer review/commission would be appointed by City Council by July 1, 2010. The commission would proceed in writing their policies and rules of procedure. It must not be delayed.

This peer review/commission would work closely with the Salisbury Code Services Division to provide checks and balances and also provide support. Another means of support is the CDC. Salisbury already has the Community Development Corporation <http://www.salisburycdc.org/> which distributes HUD/CDBG funds. They should be a resource to this Commission or Review Board. Other resources include, but are not limited to, the Salisbury Community Appearance Commission <http://www.salisburync.gov/lm&d/cac/communityappearance.html>, The Historic Salisbury Foundation <http://historicsalisbury.org/>, Habitat for Humanity and the Historic Preservation Commission <http://www.salisburync.gov/lm&d/hpc/HPC.html>, and the Salisbury Police Department <http://www.salisburyncpd.org/>.

If the Housing Commission is quasi-judicial, would the appeal process go to City Council or through the court process. Jack Thomson said he would like to see appeals go before the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) before court.

There was a concern about where funding would come from. Expenses would include things such as staff time, printing and mailing costs, advertising expenses (check state statutes about notifications), training materials/conferences and legal fees.

This subcommittee hopes that a peer review/commission would define specific problems, create a way to register landlords, provide certificates of occupancy, enforce/upgrade minimum housing, research and implement a rental program. The “mothballing” of property needs to be addressed. The boarding up of houses could have more specific guidelines or standards.

Beware of intended consequences such as a reduction of affordable housing. Make every effort not to appear as a revenue-generating scheme by the City.

Chris Branham would like to see this peer review/commission perform in a proactive manner early in the process of the notice of compliance (which are most often complaint driven). He would like to see this peer review/commission as a tool to help property owners to find solutions.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Connor adjourned the meeting.